

February 27, 2004

The Honorable Joseph E. Kernan  
Governor, State of Indiana  
The Honorable Members of the  
Indiana General Assembly

Re: 2003 Annual Report of the  
Indiana Ground Water Task Force

On behalf of the members of the Interagency Ground Water Task Force, I am pleased to submit our annual report pursuant to IC 13-18-17-1 (h). This report summarizes the issues and activities addressed by the Task Force during the calendar year 2003 and provides an update on the status of key ground water protection activities.

During the coming year, the Task Force will continue to seek broad-based public input and support as various issues are addressed in the development and implementation of comprehensive ground water initiatives. The Task Force will gladly respond to any comments or suggestion regarding the activities address in the report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeff Smith", followed by a horizontal line.

Sincerely,

Jeff Smith  
Chairperson

Attachments

## **INDIANA GROUND WATER TASK FORCE**

### **2003 Annual Report to the General Assembly and Governor**

In 1989, the Indiana General Assembly passed the Ground Water Protection Act, IC 13-18-17. A key element of this legislation was the creation of the Governor's Interagency Ground Water Task Force. The Task Force was established to:

- Study ground water contamination in Indiana;
- Coordinate efforts among agencies to address ground water pollution problems;
- Coordinate the implementation of the Indiana Ground Water Protection and Management Strategy; and
- Develop policies to prevent ground water pollution.

Members of the Governor's Interagency Ground Water Task Force and their representations include:

- Lori Kaplan, Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Environmental Management;
- John Goss, Director of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources;
- Gregory Wilson, MD., Commissioner of the Indiana Department of Health;
- Alan Hanks, State Chemist, Office of the Indiana State Chemist;
- Tracy Boatwright, State Fire Marshal, Office of the Fire Marshal;
- Mark Lange, business community;
- Honorable David Butterfield, Mayor of Valparaiso, local government;
- Mike Baise, agricultural community;
- Angela Herrman, environmental community;
- Jeff Smith, labor community; and
- John Steinmetz, State Geologist, Indiana Geological Survey, ad hoc member.

During 2003, the Ground Water Task Force conducted four (4) meetings. Those meetings were held on January 17, 2003, April 11, 2003, July 18, 2003 and October 17, 2003.

In 2002, the Ground Water Task Force's attention was on the implementation of Indiana's Ground Water Quality Standards rule and a review and update of Indiana's Ground Water Protection and Management Strategy. In 2003, this discussion continued as well as a review and update of the 1987 Indiana Ground Water Protection and Management Strategy. A major activity conducted during 2003 was updating, reviewing and prioritizing threats to ground water.

The threats to ground water that were considered for prioritization and ranking included: surface impoundments, coal ash lagoons, wastewater treatment lagoons, pesticide and fertilizer over-application, class V injection wells, de-icing salt storage,

abandoned wells, and failing septic systems or other inappropriate or insufficient wastewater treatment. Once the threats to ground water are prioritized, and the Task Force believes additional protective measures are necessary, IDEM will work with the appropriate agency/program to apply ground water quality standards to that activity.

Questions considered and discussed about the threats and the potential sources of the identified threats included:

- Is the source (of the threat) adequately regulated?
- Is the threat well documented?
- Can the threat be reasonably reduced?
- Are the locations of the sources (of the threat) known?

Recommended activities to reduce threats to ground water based on the questions asked consist of:

Information on the impacts of different types of surface impoundments and lagoons, e.g., coal ash; wastewater treatment; agricultural; and industrial, should be collected to assess the need for future regulation of these sources to protect ground water.

Existing mechanisms, e.g., the Purdue Extension, should be employed to educate pesticide and fertilizer applicators on best management practices for protecting ground water.

Educational materials should be developed to teach public and private entities proper procedures for deicer storage, handling, and management to protect ground water.

An education and awareness program for proper well abandonment should be developed and implemented.

The possibility of establishing a well abandonment assistance program should be investigated.

Consistent educational materials for proper septic system operation and maintenance should be developed.

The Task Force will consider the feasibility of the recommended activities and prioritize those activities determined to be feasible.

Understanding that approximately seventy percent (70%) of Hoosiers rely on ground water supplies and that this reliance is expected to increase in the future, the Ground Water Task Force will continue to review and comment on the various issues involved in protecting and maintaining ground water for citizens of Indiana. The Ground Water Task Force will continue to concentrate on the goal set forth in the 1992 Policy Framework for the Protection of Indiana's Ground Water which states: "The State of Indiana shall protect ground water resources which currently meet criteria for human health protection from further degradation. The State recognizes that it may need to take into account a number of practical considerations in protecting ground water including, but not limited to: site characteristics, technical feasibility, cost, and relative benefit.

